

**New Internationalist**

The people, the ideas, the action in the fight for global justice

# Short news stories

**New Internationalist Easier English**

**Ready Upper Intermediate Lesson**

This lesson:

- Speaking
- Reading
- Grammar



What are the stories?  
Which countries are  
they from?



# Which country?

1. This country is protected by 10m fences, water and guards.
2. Many trees have been planted to protect against tsunamis.
3. Many children have been diagnosed with thyroid cancer because of a nuclear accident in 1986.
4. Raised boardwalks have been built because the ground has sunk due to climate change.
5. People were arrested for killing elephants and rhinos.
6. No rubbish was collected in October.
7. 69 indigenous languages are spoken on one island.
8. Women have been discriminated against and abused for many years.
9. 1000 people were arrested after buildings were burnt in the capital after elections in September.
10. Far too many people have been put in prison for drug offences.
11. Young people, aged 8 – 16 are being trained to shoot and use weapons.
12. Many people were injured in protests in July after security killed the leader of a separatist group.
13. Trees are being studied to find out about drought.
14. Boys hope they will be invited to travel and show their ninja skills.
15. Migrants have not been allowed to continue on their journey.
16. Ethnic minorities have been treated badly, so many people have protested.
17. 17,000 homes were carried away in monsoon floods.
18. Protests have been organised by many different groups, eg. against Uber, sea algae and pensions.

# Scan-read these stories to check:

- [https://eewiki.newint.org/index.php/Short stories from around the world: 2016](https://eewiki.newint.org/index.php/Short_stories_from_around_the_world:2016)



Look back at the 18 sentences (slide 4) and discuss:

**1/ Which grammar structure is included in all 18 sentences?**

**2/ Underline the example(s) in each sentence.**

**3/ Are all the examples the same? How are they different?**

**4/ Why is this grammar structure used?**

# The Passive

1. This country is protected by 10m fences, water and guards.
2. Many trees have been planted to protect against tsunamis.
3. Many children have been diagnosed with thyroid cancer because of a nuclear accident in 1986.
4. Raised boardwalks have been built because the ground has sunk due to climate change.
5. People were arrested for killing elephants and rhinos.
6. No rubbish was collected in October.
7. 69 indigenous languages are spoken on one island.
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# The Passive

*Find examples in the 18 sentences of:*

- 1/ Present simple passive
- 2/ Present continuous passive
- 3/ Past simple passive
- 4/ Present perfect passive
- 5/ Future simple passive
- 6/ A negative passive

# The Passive: Who/what does what to who/what?

eg. **a) The country is protected by fences, water and guards.**

**b) 1,000 people were arrested.**

**c) Trees have been studied.**

Who/what (subject)	does what (action)	to who/what (object)
a) Fences/water/guards	protect	the country
b) Police ???	arrested	1,000 people
c) Scientists???	have studied	trees

**In pairs, choose 10 more from the 18 sentences and read the mini-texts again to find out 'who/what does what to who/what?' and continue the table above.**

# What do you think these stories (from 2105) are about?

a/



b/



**And which  
country  
are they  
from?**

c/



d/



e/



f/



# Match these 6 stories to the 6 photos:

1) LIBERIA, AFRICA Sunshine ladies. In Liberia, women solar engineers install and manage solar lamps in their communities. Many villages do not have electrical power. Most of this was destroyed in Liberia's 14-year civil war. This ended in 2003. In 2009, a National Energy Policy decided they must have 30-per-cent renewable power generation by the end of 2015. The sunshine ladies are helping this. Women are now 54 per cent of workers in Liberia.

2) BAHRAIN, MIDDLE EAST A cat eats small bits of meat in the meat market. At the start of 2015, the government told the people of Bahrain there would not be enough meat because they cut subsidies on meat imports. But in October, the low oil prices made the economy worse. So the government stopped subsidies on meat completely. So the price of meat doubled, and people stopped buying it.

3) PAKISTAN, ASIA Very hot weather in Karachi: a man under a public water tap after he filled bottles. More than 800 people died in Sindh (south Pakistan) in the terrible heatwave in June. There were emergency medical paramilitary camps in the streets. Temperatures went up to 45°C (113°F). There were long power cuts so many people could not use air-conditioning and fans. Many people said local authorities did not do enough.

4) JAPAN, ASIA There are 5.5 million black sacks of radiation-contaminated soil around in Fukushima province. The government is still cleaning up after the 2011 nuclear disaster. There are hundreds of square kilometres that no-one can enter because of radioactivity. They have put thousands of tonnes of topsoil in bags, but there is nowhere to keep the radioactive material. There could be 20 million bags when the clean-up operations end in 2017.

5) NIUE/NEW ZEALAND Government worker Foag Kaiuha and his wife Nera live on the Pacific island of Niue. But about 90-95 per cent of the population – about 20,000 people – have moved to New Zealand/Aotearoa, where there are more jobs and better opportunities. Only 1,500 people still live there. So the government has invited immigrants from Tuvalu, an island nearby. Tuvalu has problems with rising sea levels caused by climate change. In 2015, the New Zealand foreign minister said they are investing NZ\$7.5-million in expanding a resort on the island. They say that tourism is very important to getting Niue independent again.

6) ARGENTINA, S.AMERICA A new law (May 2015) in the province of Buenos Aires says that children's hospitals must have trained clowns. 'Clown doctors' do not need a medical degree, but Rubén Darío Golia from congress, who introduced the law, believes they will help the work of doctors. 'When we laugh, we produce encephalin, which, like morphine, can reduce pain,' he explained.

# Summarise the news stories using the passive:

Examples:

- **Solar lamps have been installed by women in Liberia.**
- **Government subsidies on imported meat were cut in Bahrain.**
- **The power was cut in a terrible heatwave in Pakistan.**

**Write passive sentences about the news from:**

- Japan
- Niue and
- Argentina

Practice:

**Choose 10 more stories to write passive sentences about from this link – more short news stories from 2015:**

<https://eewiki.newint.org/index.php/2015: news from around the world>

**Check all the passive sentences:**

- Have part of the verb 'to be'
- Have a past participle (have you checked if this is regular or irregular?)
- Make sense! (check back: who/what does what to who/what?)



# Homework

Go to the Easier English wiki:

- [https://eewiki.newint.org/index.php/Main\\_Page](https://eewiki.newint.org/index.php/Main_Page)

Write a topic you would like to read about in the Search box (top right), then click on one of the articles and read it. As you read, try to write as many passive sentences as you can about the ideas from the article.